

Physical Education & Activity

Many adolescents are getting less than the recommended amount of physical activity. The increased use of technology, such as video games and cell phones, along with busy family schedules has led to a more sedentary lifestyle. Physical inactivity, combined with poor diet, can lead to health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. Schools should implement quality physical education programs and encourage physical activity among students.

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Physical Education

A physical education program provides an opportunity for students to acquire the knowledge and skills to lead an active lifestyle. The benefits of a quality physical education program include improved physical fitness, self-discipline, increased self-confidence, and stress reduction. In addition, a physically active student is more likely to be successful in school. The National Association for Sports and Physical Education recommends that schools provide 150 minutes of instructional physical education for elementary school children and 225 minutes for middle and high school students per week for the entire school year.





Physical Activity

A physical education program provides an appropriate sequencing of learning opportunities for students. Physical education should not be confused with physical activity which includes recess, intramurals, and other recreational endeavors. Schools can engage in a variety of activities that promote physical activity.

[Strategies to Increase Physical Activity](#)

Improving Physical Education and Physical Activity

Schools should establish guidelines that improve the quality of the physical education and physical activity programs provided. The following are strategies schools can include in their school wellness policy.

- Physical education credits should not be waived for other activities.
- Physical activity should not be used as a punishment.
- Physical education instructional strategies and other practices should meet the diverse needs and interests of all students.
- School facilities should be available for students and the community.

Sample Goal and Objectives

Goal:

- *The school district will provide physical education to all students in grades K-12.*

Objectives:

- *Provide 150 minutes of instructional physical education for elementary students per week*
- *Provide 225 minutes of instructional physical education for middle and high school students per week.*
- *Ensure students spend at least 50% of the physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.*

Strategies to Increase Physical Activity

There are several ways a school can increase physical activity outside of a structured physical education class. The following are strategies included in the Active Schools Toolkit. Additional strategies and information can be found at the DPI Student Services – Prevention and Wellness website for [Physical Education and Activity](#).

Physical Activity as Part of the School Day

- *Active Recess* provides children with a guarantee of non-structured physical activity. It involves setting up activity stations on the playground and grassy areas.
- *Active Classrooms* integrate short, movement breaks into the classroom.
 - For sample activity cards of movement breaks, visit Ohio Team Nutrition – [Classrooms That Move](#).
- *Open Gym* allows access to students before and after school, as well as during the lunch period.

Physical Activity Outside of the School Day

- *Intramural programs* ensure all students have the opportunity to participate in physical activity, regardless of athletic ability.
- *Before or After School Activities* may be offered to provide organized activities for students.
- *Physical Education Homework* encourages students to be physically active outside of class and earn credit. It involves assigning homework for physical activity outside of PE class.

School Transportation-Related Physical Activity

- *Safe Routes to School Program* creates safer walking and biking routes. Therefore parents will perceive few barriers to walking or biking to school, resulting in increased physical activity of students.
- *Active Transportation* is an organized effort to provide adult supervision as children walk or bike to school, such as a walking school bus.

